Populating Address List with the Recipient Update Service

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One of the main tasks of the Recipient Update Service is to populate the attribute “showInAddressBook” on the Active Directory. Each mail-enabled object might have this attribute. This includes users, contacts, groups, public-folders and any other object on the DS that supports “showInAddressBook” and has a “mailNickname”.

The “showInAddressBook” attribute has two purposes. The first is to let people see the entry listed in the Address List (Address Book) using a MAPI interface. The second purpose is to let somebody to “Resolve a Name” on a MAPI client, like Microsoft Outlook.

When you install Outlook on your machine to access an Exchange Mailbox, you’ll need to create a profile for that Mailbox. This is done adding a service to the Outlook, and one of the steps is to point out what your server name is and what your mailbox is. Then you have a button called “Check Names” that will let you “Resolve a Name”.

When you click that button, the Outlook thru MAPI will contact the Exchange Server that you specified and ask if there is an entry with that alias. The server side, for instance, will search all mail-enabled objects that belong to at least one Address List and that match the alias. After that, the client is ready to logon.

If a user doesn’t have “showInAddressBook” it doesn’t belong to any Address List, thus not letting that user to “Resolve Names”.

By default, you’ll have several Address List configured on your Exchange 2000. The most important is the “Default Global Address List”, which was known on Exchange 5.5 as the GAL (Global Address List). Exchange 2000 let you have several GALs, and several Address Lists with a much richer definition than previous versions of Exchange.

For instance, you could create an Address List called “Top Executives” that searches for entries that have “VP”, “President”, “CEO” or “Director” in the title.

By default, Exchange 2000 provides you with the following Address List, plus the Default GAL:

- All Conferencing Resources
- All Contacts
- All Groups
- All Users

- Public Folders

Every time that a user, a group, or any object is added or modified on the Active Directory, the Recipient Update Service will pick up that object, and see on which ones of the available Address Lists it belongs to, and add that Address List to the “showInAddressBook” attribute.

One exception for this is if you have the “msExchHideFromAddressLists” attribute set to “TRUE”. On this case the Recipient Update Service won’t stamp any Address List, and will remove any one that is already present on the attribute.

On these case, you’ll be able to Resolve Names, thus create a profile on Outlook. To be able to access this mailbox, you need to unhide this object, create the profile, and then hide it again.